<center>**REMARKS**</center>

Claims 1-42 are pending herein.

I. The anticipation rejections of claims 1-15 based on Okimoto (US 6,268,926) as noted on page 4 of the Office Action.

The USPTO respectfully rejects claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Okimoto. Claim 1 is an independent claim.

A. Okimoto does not disclose that post processing is defined as such a physical treatment that is to be applied to said print product after said whole image forming process is completed, so as to physically change an appearance and/or a binding mode of said print product, as claimed in independent claim 1.

Claim 1 claims in relevant part:

> "a receiving section to receive said electronic mail including said image data and **finishing information representing a post processing** to be applied to said print product created on the basis of said image data, wherein said print product includes a single paper sheet or a plurality of paper sheets, on each of which an image is already formed through a whole image forming process based on said image data, and **said post processing is defined as such a physical treatment that is to be applied to said print product after said whole image forming process is completed, so as to physically change an appearance and/or a binding mode of said print product.**" **(emphasis added)**

No new matter is added by the amendments. Support for the amendments is found on page 26, lines 1-12 and page 40, lines 7-13 of the present specification. Regarding these limitations, it is respectfully not seen where the cited references teach or suggest the claimed structure quoted above.

For example, the USPTO respectfully argues on page 3 of the Office Action that Okimoto teaches:

> "finishing information (i.e., a process for reducing the size of a print pattern defined by one page's worth of print data so that reduced print patterns defined by more than one pages' worth of print data can be printed onto one sheet of paper; see col. 6, lines 64-67 and col. 26, lines 10-15, fig. 13, S982) representing a post processing to be applied to said print product created on the basis of said image data."

Additionally, the USPTO respectfully argues on page 5 of the Office Action that column 11, line 65 and column 12, lines 20-25 of Okimoto disclose a post processing to be applied to the print product.

However, it is respectfully asserted that **the cited post processing of Okimoto is not a physical treatment that physically changes an appearance and/or a binding mode of said print product,** as claimed in claim 1. Instead, it is respectfully asserted that the cited post processing of Okimoto (i.e., reducing the size of a print pattern defined by one page's worth of print data so that reduced print patterns defined by more than one page's worth of print data can be printed onto one sheet of paper) is a type of image processing that is applied to image data, and is respectfully not an example of physically changing an appearance and/or a binding mode of the paper sheets included in the print product. Additionally, it is further respectfully asserted that the remaining portions of **Okimoto also do not teach or suggest any type of post processing that physically changes the print product**, as claimed in claim 1.

In contrast, page 26, lines 1-12 of the present specification describe one possible example of the claimed structure quoted above. For example, page 26 of the present specification describes how the post processing (i.e., finishing information) can be "stapled output," "output in booklet," "punching," or "stamping." It is respectfully important to note that **these post processing steps are physical treatments performed on the print product**, such as stapling the pages, arranging the pages in a booklet, punching holes in the paper, or stamping the paper. In other words, **these post processing steps physically change an appearance and/or binding mode of the print product**, as claimed in claim 1.

The distinction is important and non-trivial because it presents significant advantages over conventional structures. For example, the specifically claimed structure of claim 1 makes it possible to change the finishing information acquired from the electronic mail to changed information suitable for the image forming apparatus itself, based on the result of comparison made by the finishing information judging section. Thus, it becomes possible to implement the image forming operation and the post processing (finishing operation), even if the post processing established on the electronic mail sender side does not match the post processing

ability of the image forming apparatus. This benefit respectfully cannot be achieved in Okimoto, which relates to processing of image data and not physical treatment post processing that physically changes the print product, as claimed in claim 1.

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that Okimoto does not disclose all of the limitations of independent claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that Okimoto does not anticipate independent claim 1.

B. Further explanation.

Applicants respectfully note the following further explanation regarding claim 1. Overall, it is respectfully noted that there is a distinction between image processing of image data and physical post-processing of the actual physical print product.

During the image forming process, various kinds of image processing, such as an image size change processing, noise reduction processing, density correction processing, etc., can be applied to the image data, so as to make the size and quality of the reproduced image comply with the sender's request. After the whole image forming process is completed, post-processing, such as punching, stapling, cutting, binding, etc can be applied **to the actual paper sheets of the print product, instead of the images formed or printed on the paper sheets**. In other words, image processing can happen independent of the actual physical print product, whereas post processing physically alters the actual print product.

Additionally, it is respectfully noted that the acquiring section separately acquires image data and finishing information from the electronic mail. Then, the finishing information judging section compares the post processing represented by the acquired finishing information with those provided in advance in the image forming apparatus itself as available post processing. The determining section can then determine whether or not the finishing information should be changed.

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable over the cited reference Okimoto.

C. The dependent claims.

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable, and therefore it is further respectfully asserted that dependent claims 2-15 are also allowable.

II. Conclusion.

Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Please contact the undersigned for any reason. Applicants seek to cooperate with the Examiner including via telephone if convenient for the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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